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7 February 1950

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: BGFIEND - Implementation of Clandestine Sea-borne Propaganda Broadcasts.

1. In the light of the new position toward BGFIEND taken by the British in early January and of the subsequent developments with respect to DTNOTCH, we must accept as final the unwillingness of the British to participate in joint operation of the broadcasting vessel, which is a large part of our contemplated propaganda phase.

2. However, the British withdrawal should not in any way alter OPC's carefully-considered decision to utilize such a vessel. This method of putting broadcasts into Albania has been reviewed both as to technical feasibility and political desirability, and has been approved in principle by the State Department. No other method of broadcasting into Albania appears either technically feasible or politically desirable at this time.

3. Toward activating such a vessel OPC has already made the following considerable progress:

a. The technical problems attendant upon broadcasting from a small craft have been studied by Communications technicians and the broadcasting range and time limits have been carefully tabulated and defined.

b. With this information, specialized equipment which will operate satisfactorily under small vessel conditions has been specified, procured, tested, crated and is now in a warehouse in readiness for immediate dispatch to any point where final cover considerations indicate installation aboard the vessel should be made.

c. All special equipment required to outfit an Executive Center ashore to guide the vessel's operations has been specified, ordered and is, for the most part, at hand.

d. Requirements for trained broadcasting and technical personnel, to staff both the vessel and the Center have been determined and their procurement is in progress. The services of a radio propaganda specialist for the Center have been secured; he has been

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thoroughly indoctrinated in the propaganda objectives of BGFIEND; and he will be ready to depart overseas within three weeks.

4. It is clear that, with the withdrawal of the British from the broadcast ship operation, OPC will need assistance from another Service in basing and operating the broadcasting vessel under properly secure cover arrangements. To meet this need, a unilateral approach on our part to one of three Services is indicated:

a. The Italian Services. Although the Italians, in view of their long-time and current interest in Albanian affairs, would be both capable of, and in all probability eager for, cooperation with OPC in this matter, political considerations, including the current Italian relationships to rightist, collaborationist Albanians, render their participation in this operation undesirable. (This has been the Department of State view up to the present. See the original "Plan for Albania".) There is an additional complication in connection with the Italians, however; namely, the existing OSO relationship with the Italian Services. In our talks to date with our OSO colleagues, they have made clear their insistence that (a) all liaison with the Italian Services must be through OSO channels, and (b) US/UK cooperation in the overall venture must not be revealed. Whether or not this OSO view will prevail ultimately is beside the point: it's resolution at this stage will inevitably consume so much time as to gravely delay the implementation of the propaganda phase of BGFIEND. In the face of these objections, it would seem evident that the Italian Services should not be utilized.

b. The Greek Service. In a like manner, although a unilateral approach to the Greek Service would in all probability be warmly received, and in fact is constantly being sought by the Greeks themselves, it is virtually certain that participation of the Greeks would, for obvious political reasons connected with territorial issues, prejudice the success of the entire BGFIEND program. We have been repeatedly cautioned by the State Department on connections with the Greeks on the BGFIEND operation, on security as well as political grounds. Additionally, OSO has indicated it would take a similar attitude towards an approach to the Greek Service as toward an approach to the Italian Services. In the face of these objections it seems evident that the Greek Service, also, cannot be utilized.

c. The French Service. In the case of the French Service, the political connotations of joint action would not be looked on with disfavor by the State Department; and have in fact been favorably commented upon by the Embassy, Paris. The attitude of the Albanian people would not be a deterrent. In the case of the broadcast ship, adequate cover arrangements should suffice to balance such special security problems as may exist with respect

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the French Service, particularly if we bear in mind that the caveat on our operations is avoidance of documentary proof of U. S. Government participation. In the case of the French, OSO has informally indicated that they have no objection to OPC approaching the French Service directly; and the joint US/UK nature of this operation has already been revealed to the French. In addition, the French Service has clearly evinced its desire to collaborate with OPC in an operation of BGFIEND's type. The French desire for collaboration should ultimately be, if it survives the rebuffs it has so far received, of great value to us in other areas of Eastern Europe. We should not, therefore, allow this enthusiasm to wane, nor should we underestimate the concessions the French will probably be prepared to make to achieve such collaboration. A further reason for enlisting French support in the broadcast ship operation would be to forestall recent movements on their part looking toward a close collaboration with BKI and Kossovar elements, (see paragraphs five and six of ADPC memorandum to ADSO, 19 January, Top Secret Number 35899, and ADSO Memorandum to ADPC, 26 January, Top Secret Number 33129-pp). These efforts on the part of the French will, unless diverted, put us in the unhappy position of being in direct competition with the French, who will not only be supporting what we regard as undesirable Albanian emigre groups, but will also be supporting groups whose avowed program includes return of the Kossovo to Albania. Lastly, the physical assets which the French could bring to the operation would be of very great assistance in the propaganda phase of BGFIEND.

(1) First among these would be their presumed ability to make base facilities in Northern Tunisia available for the broadcasting vessel. (In a Memorandum for File under date of 31 January 1950, the feasibility of operating a vessel of DTNOTCH's size from the Cape Bon area of Tunisia was confirmed by NSO.)

(2) A second asset would be their ability to supply suitable cover and a foreign crew if necessary. In all probability they could also arrange for the acquisition of a French-registered vessel in the Mediterranean area, if desirable.

(3) Lastly, the presence of the French Legation in Tirana, which could become a source of factual day-to-day intelligence for the broadcasts, would be of considerable value.

5. In view of the foregoing, the following is recommended, in the order indicated:

a. ADPC authorize in principle a unilateral OPC approach to the French Service, for the purpose of enlisting their cooperation in the broadcast ship phase of BGFIEND.

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b. We inform the British of our intention to approach the French on this matter, in order to devise an appropriate formula for a unilateral OPC approach, in the event that the British refuse to associate themselves with us in such an approach. (See my memorandum of 2 February, "Possible British Attitude Toward OPC Collaboration with Another Service on Certain Aspects of BGFIEND".)

c. We then proceed to approach the French Service, in an effort to obtain cover and basing facilities for the broadcast ship. This should include a clear expression to the French that collaboration with BKI and Kossovar elements is a bar to US/French collaboration. These negotiations should also include a determination as to desirable locale for the purchase of the vessel itself.



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